The Obsanga Family of Tibiao, Antique Province, Philippines

A Genealogical Reconstruction from 19th-Century Colonial Records

Working Paper / Preliminary Research Report

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Date: 19 March 2026

Version 1.1

Note: This is a private family history working paper based on publicly available digitized archival records. All living individuals have been anonymized for privacy reasons. The content is intended for academic discussion and further research only.

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Abstract

This working paper presents a preliminary genealogical reconstruction of the Obsanga family from Tibiao, Antique Province, Philippines, based exclusively on digitized colonial-era records available through FamilySearch. The evidence spans from the mid-19th century to the early American period and includes two 1856 tribute and exemption lists, the complete 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas (covering all 25 cabecerias), a ca. 1888 administrative investigation file (certified in Manila in 1891), a 1911 civil marriage registry, and a 1919 notarial act.

The surname Obsanga is exceptionally rare in the region and does not appear in the Clavería surname catalogue of 1849, indicating it is likely a retained pre-colonial or deeply localized name. The surviving documents show the name confined to a single group within Tibiao, with no unrelated bearers identified across the examined sources.

Key individuals documented include Fausto Obsanga (exempted from tribute in 1856 due to advanced age); Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano (married householder in 1856, with certification on the 1886–1887 padrón suggesting involvement as Cabeza de Barangay); Gregorio Obsanga (aged 63 in 1886–1887); Juan Obsanga (aged 35 in 1886–1887, documented as alguacil ca. 1888, and named father of Rosela in the 1911 marriage registry); Don Cerelo Obsanga (aged 33 in 1886–1887, listed with the honorific “Don” and leading position in Cabeceria No. 25); and Cayetana Obsanga (explicitly named daughter of Doroteo in the 1919 notarial act).

Administrative roles (Cabeza de Barangay, alguacil) and privileges (age-based exemptions) recur across generations, consistent with membership in the local Principalía – the indigenous elite class recognized under Spanish rule. In the pre-Maura Law context (promulgated 1893, effective 1895), such positions were typically hereditary and restricted to established families before reforms broadened eligibility.

While exact parent-child relationships remain probable rather than definitively proven (due to the near-total loss of parish registers before 1890 in rural Antique), the alignment of ages, extreme surname rarity, geographic continuity in Tibiao, and consistent elite markers support the hypothesis of a single prominent lineage. Juan Obsanga emerges as Gregorio’s most probable son, and Don Cerelo as a plausible additional son (likely brother of Juan), though the latter remains hypothetical pending further evidence.

This reconstruction offers a window into local elite dynamics in late Spanish colonial Antique Province and invites further archival research to confirm or refine the proposed connections.

1. Introduction

Genealogical research in the Philippines is both rewarding and challenging. The country possesses a rich archival heritage from the Spanish colonial period, but many of the most valuable sources – particularly parish registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials – have been lost to wars, fires, typhoons, humidity, insects, and neglect. In rural areas such as Antique Province on Panay Island, the survival rate of pre-1890 church records is especially low. What remains are often the administrative by-products of colonial rule: tribute lists, polista registers (forced labor rosters), notarial acts, and occasional investigation files. These bureaucratic documents, though dry and functional, frequently provide the only surviving glimpses into the lives, families, and social standing of ordinary and elite Filipinos in the 19th century.

This working paper focuses on one such lineage: the Obsanga family from the municipality of Tibiao in Antique Province. The surname Obsanga is exceptionally rare in the region and does not appear in the Clavería surname catalogue of 1849 (promulgated November 21, 1849), which distributed standardized Spanish surnames to most of the indigenous population. Its absence strongly suggests that Obsanga is a retained pre-colonial or deeply localized name, already in use by a specific family or group before the mid-19th-century surname reforms were fully enforced in many rural areas.

In a small pueblo like Tibiao – with an estimated population of only 5,000–7,000 inhabitants in the 1880s and very limited outward migration – the near-total absence of the name outside a single interrelated group is not coincidence. The reconstruction presented here draws on five key digitized sources from FamilySearch: two 1856 tribute and exemption records, the complete 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas covering all 25 cabecerias of Tibiao, a ca. 1888 administrative investigation file (certified in Manila in 1891), a 1911 civil marriage registry, and a 1919 notarial act. Together, these documents allow tracing of individuals bearing the surname from the mid-19th century into the early American period.

Recurring administrative roles (such as Cabeza de Barangay and alguacil) and privileges (age-based exemptions from tribute and forced labor) appear across the records, consistent with patterns associated with the local Principalía – the indigenous elite class recognized and co-opted by Spanish authorities to maintain order and collect taxes. Before the Maura Law reforms (promulgated 1893, effective 1895), such positions and exemptions were largely hereditary and confined to established families.

The paper does not claim definitive proof of every intergenerational link; the scarcity of surviving parish registers before 1890 in rural Antique makes direct sacramental confirmation impossible in most cases. Instead, it presents the most plausible interpretation based on chronological fit, geographic concentration in Tibiao, surname rarity, and recurring markers of local administrative involvement.

This reconstruction contributes to understanding how indigenous elite families in late Spanish colonial Antique Province navigated and maintained local influence through modest bureaucratic roles, and it demonstrates the value of seemingly minor administrative records in reconstructing family histories where traditional parish sources have been lost.

2. Sources and Methodology

All sources used in this reconstruction come from FamilySearch's digitized collections of Philippine colonial records. These are publicly accessible microfilmed or scanned originals, mostly from the Spanish and early American periods. The analysis rests entirely on primary documents; no secondary sources or published genealogies were consulted. High-resolution images were examined to verify handwriting, cross-check spellings, and assess context.

The core sources are:

1. **1856 Tribute and Exemption Records** (two separate lists) These are early colonial administrative documents listing tributarios (tribute payers) and those exempted from tribute or polo y servicio (forced labor).
    - One is a household/tribute register (Image 9 of 176, IGN 007934501), which names Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano together with his wife Calestra Rimon Andrés.
    - The other is a list of exemptions "Por edad" (due to age, Image 24 of 176, same IGN), which includes Fausto Obsanga. They predate the full enforcement of the Clavería surname decree (promulgated 1849) in many rural areas and provide early snapshots of adult male residents in Tibiao.
2. **1886–1887 Padrón de polistas** (complete review of all 25 cabecerias) This is the most comprehensive single source: a forced labor and tribute roster covering every barangay (cabecería) in Tibiao. The digitized version (IGN 007922295) was reviewed in full. The surname Obsanga (including minor variants such as Obsianga, Obanga, or Cirilo in handwritten entries) appears in only three cabecerias:
    - Cabeceria No. 1: Gregorio Obsanga (age 63) and Juan Obsanga (age 35).
    - Cabeceria No. 2: Juan Obsanga dela Cruz (age 61) and Timoteo Obsanga dela Cruz (age 27).
    - Cabeceria No. 25: Don Cerelo Obsanga (also spelled Cereleo Obsianga or Cirilo Obsanga, age 33), listed at position 1 with the honorific "Don" and profession "Labrador". No other individuals bearing the surname (or close variants) appear in the remaining cabecerias (relevant images include 238, 239, 263 of 420, among others examined for confirmation).
3. **ca. 1888 Administrative Investigation File** (certified Manila 1891) An official expediente (Image 97 of 160, IGN 113783864) mentions Juan Obsanga serving as alguacil in Antique province, in connection with a reprimand and fine of half a peso

(medio peso) for a delay in official duties. The events involve local officials in Antique (references to Guasiján, Culiacán, Bajonongon).

4. **1911 Marriage Registry in Tibiao** A civil marriage record (Image 59 of 72, IGN 004046265) names Juan Obsanga and Juana [surname partially illegible, possibly resembling “Rondino” or similar] as the parents of the bride Rosela Obsanga (also spelled Rosalia).
5. **1919 Notarial Act in Tibiao** A notarial document (Image 359 of 443, IGN 007919625) explicitly identifies Cayetana Obsanga as the daughter of Doroteo Obsanga.

Methodology

The approach was straightforward but careful:

- Name matching across documents, accepting minor handwriting variations (Obsanga, Obsianga, Obanga, Obsanga Victoriano, Obsanga dela Cruz) as normal in colonial records.
- Age and generational alignment: Approximate birth years were calculated from stated ages to test realistic generational gaps (typically 20–35 years between parents and children).
- Geographic clustering: All records are from Tibiao or Antique province – no evidence of migration outside this area.
- Surname rarity analysis: The complete scan of the 1886–1887 padrón confirmed that Obsanga is confined to one group in Tibiao.
- Contextual interpretation: Administrative roles (Cabeza de Barangay, alguacil) and exemptions were noted as recurring features, consistent with historical patterns associated with the Principalía in late Spanish Philippines.

Caution on certainty: Where direct parent-child links are absent (no surviving baptismal records before 1890), phrases such as “probable”, “plausible”, or “most coherent interpretation” are used to reflect evidential limits. No assumptions were made beyond what the documents reasonably support. The reconstruction prioritizes consistency, chronological fit, and the overwhelming rarity of the surname in a small rural setting. While absolute proof of every relationship is impossible without lost church books, the cumulative weight of the evidence makes this lineage the most coherent explanation available from surviving sources. Further archival discoveries – especially land titles or notarial protocols – could confirm or refine these connections.

3. Findings

3.1 Earliest Generation (1856)

Two 1856 records from Tibiao contain mentions of individuals bearing the surname Obsanga (or variants).

The first document is a household or tribute register (Image 9 of 176, Image Group Number 007934501). It lists Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano together with his wife Calestra Rimon Andrés. Both individuals are recorded using full Spanish-style names, including secondary surnames (Victoriano and Andrés). Doroteo is entered as the head of the household.

The second document is a separate list of individuals exempted from tribute or polo y servicio obligations under the category “Por edad” (due to age) (Image 24 of 176, same Image Group Number 007934501). The list includes Fausto Obsanga.

Colonial regulations typically exempted men from tribute and forced labor obligations when they reached the age of 60 (in some cases the threshold was applied between 55 and 65, depending on local practice). On this basis, Fausto Obsanga’s inclusion in the exemption list indicates that he had reached or exceeded this age threshold by 1856.

In both 1856 records, the surname Obsanga (or close variants) appears only in connection with the individuals named above. No other persons bearing this surname are listed in these documents.

These records predate the full and uniform enforcement of the Clavería surname decree (promulgated 1849) in many rural areas of the Philippines.

The following section presents the findings from the 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas.

3.2 Core Generation (1886–1887 Padrón de polistas)

The 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas is a complete forced labor and tribute roster for the municipality of Tibiao, organized by its 25 cabecerias (barangays). These lists were compiled by local officials, often the Cabeza de Barangay, to record able-bodied adult males (typically aged 16 to 60) subject to polo y servicio (forced labor) or tribute obligations. The document includes names, approximate ages, and in some cases occupations or other notes.

The digitized version (Image Group Number 007922295) was reviewed in full, covering all 25 cabecerias. The surname Obsanga (including minor spelling variants such as Obsianga, Obanga, or Cirilo in handwritten entries) appears in only three cabecerias. No additional individuals bearing this surname (or close variants) are listed in the remaining cabecerias.

The entries are as follows:

- **Cabeceria No. 1**: Gregorio Obsanga, age 63; Juan Obsanga, age 35.
- **Cabeceria No. 2**: Juan Obsanga dela Cruz, age 61; Timoteo Obsanga dela Cruz, age 27.
- **Cabeceria No. 25**: Don Cerelo Obsanga (also recorded in handwriting variations as Cereleo Obsianga or Cirilo Obsanga), age 33, listed at position 1 with the honorific “Don” and the profession “Labrador”.

These are the only occurrences of the surname Obsanga in the entire padrón. Relevant images include 238, 239, 263 of 420, among others examined for confirmation.

Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano (documented in the 1856 records) does not appear by name in the polista lists. However, his signature or certification is present at the end of one of the cabeceria sections (Cabeceria No. 1), indicating involvement in the compilation or approval process.

The secondary surname “dela Cruz” appears in the Cabeceria No. 2 entries (Juan and Timoteo). This reflects a common colonial naming practice following the Clavería decree (promulgated November 21, 1849), where secondary surnames were often assigned or adopted, frequently religious in origin (such as dela Cruz).

The padrón does not contain explicit statements of parent-child, sibling, or other kinship relationships, as this was not the purpose of the document.

The next sections present findings from the ca. 1888 administrative investigation file and the early 20th-century records (1911 marriage registry and 1919 notarial act).

3.3 Administrative Role (ca. 1888 Investigation File)

The ca. 1888 administrative investigation file (expediente) from Antique province, formally certified in Manila in 1891 (Image 97 of 160, IGN 113783864), contains a reference to an individual named Juan Obsanga.

The document records a series of incidents involving delays in official duties, faulty reporting, and minor administrative irregularities among local officials in Antique province. In one instance, the text identifies “el alguacil Juan Obsanga” (the alguacil Juan Obsanga) together with a teniente primero named Don Pedro Importante. Both men were held responsible for a delay in carrying out an assigned task. The Gobernadorcillo imposed a fine of half a peso (medio peso) on each as a reprimand.

The term “alguacil” refers to a local administrative position in late-19th-century Spanish Philippines. Alguaciles were low- to mid-level functionaries who performed duties such as delivering summons, collecting fines, assisting with tax or labor enforcement, and supporting public order under the authority of the Cabeza de Barangay or Gobernadorcillo. The role required reliability and community standing, and it was typically held by adult men in their 20s to 50s.

The file does not specify the exact municipality (such as Tibiao) but refers to events and officials in Antique province, with mentions of locations including Guasiján, Culiacán, and Bajonongon.

No additional personal or family details about Juan Obsanga are provided in the document. The reference is limited to his name, the position of alguacil, the nature of the incident, and the imposed fine.

The following subsection presents findings from the early 20th-century records (1911 marriage registry and 1919 notarial act).

3.4 Early 20th Century Confirmation

Two documents from the early 20th century provide explicit statements of parent-child relationships involving individuals with the surname Obsanga.

The first document is a civil marriage registry from Tibiao dated 1911 (Image 59 of 72, Image Group Number 004046265). It records the marriage of Clemente Lacson and Rosela Obsanga. The entry names the bride's parents as Juan Obsanga and Juana [surname partially illegible due to faded ink and handwriting; possible readings include forms resembling "Rondino", "Rondina", or similar local variants]. Juan Obsanga is explicitly identified as the father of the bride Rosela Obsanga.

The second document is a notarial act from Tibiao dated 1919 (Image 359 of 443, Image Group Number 007919625). It identifies Cayetana Obsanga as the daughter of Doroteo Obsanga. The document does not include additional details such as Cayetana's birth date or other family members.

These records are from the period of American administration in the Philippines, during which civil registration procedures were expanded and formalized following the establishment of the Bureau of the Census and Statistics in 1902. Notarial acts in this era continued as formal legal instruments for documenting relationships, property, and other matters.

No further parent-child or other kinship statements involving Obsanga individuals appear in these specific documents beyond the two explicit identifications noted above.

The following section summarizes the findings from all sources presented in this chapter.

4. Discussion

Putting all these pieces together feels a bit like assembling a puzzle where many of the original pieces have been lost to time, but the ones that remain fit together in a surprisingly coherent way. The Obsanga family in Tibiao emerges not as a scattered group of unrelated individuals sharing an unusual surname, but as a single, tightly connected lineage that left traces across nearly a century of colonial and early American records. The story is not complete – far from it – but the surviving evidence builds a strong case for continuity, local prominence, and a consistent social position that aligns with what historians describe as the Principalía class in late Spanish Philippines.

Let's start with the timeline and generational fit. The earliest documented figure is Fausto Obsanga, exempted from tribute obligations in 1856 due to advanced age (exemption category "Por edad" typically applied to men over 60, sometimes 55–65 depending on local enforcement). This places him at the beginning of the record trail, in a period when parish registers are almost entirely missing and tribute lists are often the only surviving snapshot of adult male residents. A generation later, Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano appears in the same 1856 household/tribute register as a married householder. Gregorio Obsanga, aged 63 in the 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas (born ca. 1823), fits chronologically as a contemporary of Doroteo, making a sibling relationship probable given the alignment of ages and the shared rare surname in the same small pueblo.

The 1886–1887 Padrón de polistas adds depth and texture. It shows the surname distributed across three cabecerias rather than concentrated in one – a pattern typical of larger or more influential extended families in rural pueblos, where brothers, sons, and nephews might reside in adjacent barangays while remaining part of the same lineage. Gregorio Obsanga (age 63) and Juan Obsanga (age 35) appear together in Cabeceria No. 1, with an age difference of approximately 28 years that fits realistically within the typical range for a father-son relationship (20–35 years). Juan Obsanga's later documented role as alguacil in the ca. 1888 investigation file (serving under local officials in Antique province, fined for a delay in duties) further aligns with this profile: the position required community standing and reliability, consistent with recurring administrative involvement in the family.

Don Cerelo Obsanga (age 33 in Cabeceria No. 25, listed at position 1 with the honorific "Don" and profession Labrador) presents a plausible additional connection. The close age proximity to Juan (ca. 2 years difference, both born ca. 1851–1854) and the shared elite

markers (“Don” title, leading position in a cabeceria) make Cerelo a likely brother of Juan – and thus a further probable son of Gregorio – though this remains hypothetical pending further evidence such as surviving baptismal or notarial records. The dela Cruz branch in Cabeceria No. 2 (Juan dela Cruz, age 61; Timoteo dela Cruz, age 27) reflects common colonial naming practices post-Clavería decree (1849), where secondary surnames were often assigned or adopted; it may represent a collateral line within the extended clan, but no direct link is established in the sources.

Administrative roles form another consistent thread. Doroteo’s signature/certification on the Padrón suggests involvement as Cabeza de Barangay (responsible for compiling/certifying polista lists), Juan’s documented alguacil position (ca. 1888), and Cerelo’s elevated placement with “Don” title all point to family participation in local governance. In the pre-Maura Law context (before the reforms promulgated on May 19, 1893, and effective from 1895), such positions and privileges – including exemptions from tribute and forced labor – were largely hereditary and confined to established indigenous elite families (the Principalía, descended from pre-colonial datus and recognized/co-opted by Spanish authorities). The Maura Law broadened eligibility (e.g., through tax payments, education, or prior office-holding), but prior to these changes, access remained restricted to long-established lineages. The Obsanga pattern – recurring roles across generations in a single rural pueblo – fits this historical reality closely.

The early 20th-century documents provide the strongest anchors. The 1911 civil marriage registry explicitly names Juan Obsanga as father of Rosela Obsanga (bride in Tibiao), linking the 19th-century Juan (age 35 in 1886–1887) directly to the modern line. The 1919 notarial act identifies Cayetana Obsanga as daughter of Doroteo Obsanga, confirming Doroteo’s branch survived into the American period, more than 60 years after his 1856 appearance. These explicit parent-child statements – rare in surviving colonial records – offer direct intergenerational evidence.

What ties everything together is the overwhelming rarity of the surname Obsanga. Across independent sources (1856 tribute/exemption lists, complete 1886–1887 Padrón scan of 25 cabecerias, 1888 investigation, 1911 marriage, 1919 notarial), the name appears only within this Tibiao-based group. No stray Obsangas occur in other cabecerias, no unrelated families with the name in examined Antique records. In a small rural community with limited mobility and slow enforcement of the Clavería surname decree (1849) in remote areas like Antique, this level of exclusivity is powerful evidence of a single lineage rather than coincidence.

Of course, there are limits and gaps. The near-total loss of parish registers before 1890 in rural Antique prevents direct baptismal confirmation of most parent-child links. Some details remain uncertain: Juana's surname is partially illegible, the precise relationship of the dela Cruz branch is unproven, and the alguacil reference (ca. 1888) is compelling but not definitive proof of identity with the Padrón Juan. Yet the cumulative weight of the evidence – chronological fit, geographic concentration in Tibiao, surname rarity, and recurring markers of local elite status – makes the proposed reconstruction the most coherent and plausible interpretation available from what survives.

This is not a finished family tree; it is a working hypothesis built from fragmented records. It invites further investigation – perhaps surviving land titles, later notarial protocols, or even oral family traditions passed down privately – to confirm or refine the connections. But what we have so far is a compelling story: a single Obsanga family in Tibiao, rooted in the late 18th/early 19th century, involved in local administration across generations, and continuing into the 20th century with clear parent-child links. In the broader context of Philippine history, it offers a small but meaningful window into how indigenous elite families navigated, survived, and sometimes thrived under colonial rule.

5. Conclusion

Looking back over the scattered pieces of evidence gathered from tribute exemptions, polista rosters, administrative reprimands, marriage registries, and notarial declarations, a quiet but consistent picture begins to emerge: the Obsanga family in Tibiao was not a fleeting or random presence in the historical record, but a single, enduring lineage that left its mark across nearly a century of colonial and early American documentation. From the late 18th or early 19th century through to the 1920s, the same exceptionally rare surname recurs in the same small pueblo, tied to recurring patterns of local administrative responsibility and community standing.

The proposed reconstruction traces the following probable and plausible intergenerational links:

- Fausto Obsanga, documented in 1856 as exempted from tribute due to advanced age (likely born before 1796, possibly in the 1780s or earlier), represents the earliest traceable individual.
- Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano, recorded in 1856 as a married householder and likely involved as Cabeza de Barangay around 1886–1887 (evidenced by his certification on the padrón), and Gregorio Obsanga, aged 63 in the 1886–1887 padrón (born ca. 1823), appear as contemporaries in the same geographic and chronological context, making a sibling relationship probable.
- From Gregorio, Juan Obsanga (aged 35 in 1886–1887, documented as alguacil ca. 1888, and explicitly named father of Rosela in the 1911 marriage registry) emerges as the most probable son, supported by the close age alignment, co-listing in Cabeceria No. 1, and administrative role.
- Don Cerelo Obsanga (aged 33 in 1886–1887, listed with the honorific “Don” and leading position in Cabeceria No. 25) is a plausible additional son of Gregorio – and thus likely brother of Juan – given the near-identical birth cohort and shared elite markers, though this remains hypothetical pending direct confirmation.
- Cayetana Obsanga, explicitly identified as daughter of Doroteo in the 1919 notarial act, and Rosela Obsanga, daughter of Juan in 1911, extend the documented branches into the American period.

The dela Cruz entries (Juan and Timoteo in Cabeceria No. 2) may represent a collateral line, reflecting colonial naming variations, but no direct kinship is established.

What binds these individuals is not merely the shared surname – absent from the Clavería catalogue of 1849 and confined to this Tibiao-based group across all examined sources – but the recurring involvement in local governance and the privileges that characterized the Principalía in the late Spanish era. Before the Maura Law reforms of 1893–1895 broadened access to such roles, administrative positions (Cabeza de Barangay, alguacil) and exemptions were largely hereditary and restricted to established indigenous elite families. The Obsanga pattern fits this context closely: a lineage that held modest but consistent influence in one rural pueblo over generations.

Of course, the reconstruction rests on indirect evidence. The near-total loss of parish registers before 1890 in rural Antique prevents definitive baptismal or sacramental confirmation of most links. Details such as Juana's exact surname and Cayetana's birth year remain uncertain, and alternative explanations (e.g., unrelated bearers of the name or larger generational gaps) cannot be entirely ruled out. Nevertheless, the alignment of ages, geographic exclusivity, surname rarity, and consistent elite markers across independent records makes this single-lineage hypothesis the most coherent interpretation of the surviving material.

This working paper is therefore both a summary and an invitation: a careful assembly of fragmented colonial traces into a provisional narrative, and a call for anyone with access to complementary sources – surviving land titles, notarial protocols, parish fragments, or private family traditions – to continue the search. The Obsanga story in Tibiao is far from over. Even in a small pueblo far from Manila, families like this one left lasting impressions, documented quietly but persistently across decades of change and imperial transition.

Proposed Lineage Summary (working hypothesis)

A. Fausto Obsanga (exempted 1856, likely b. before 1796) probable sons / contemporaries:
    1. Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano (married 1856, likely Cabeza ca. 1886–1887)
        a. daughter: Cayetana Obsanga (named in 1919 notarial act)
    2. Gregorio Obsanga (age 63 in 1886–1887, b. ca. 1823)
        a. most probable son: Juan Obsanga (age 35 in 1886–1887, alguacil ca. 1888)
            1. daughter: Rosela Obsanga (named in 1911 marriage registry)

b. plausible additional son: Don Cerelo Obsanga (age 33 in 1886–1887, “Don” title)

Collateral: dela Cruz branch (Juan dela Cruz age 61, Timoteo age 27 in Cabeceria No. 2)

All relationships marked as “probable” or “plausible” reflect the absence of direct sacramental proof and remain open to refinement with new archival evidence.

References

All the evidence in this working paper comes from digitized primary sources available through FamilySearch – publicly accessible scans of original colonial and early American records from the Philippines. These are not secondary interpretations or published books, but the raw archival material itself: tribute lists, polista registers, marriage entries, notarial acts, and administrative files. I have cited each source with the full FamilySearch permalink, image number, and Image Group Number (IGN) so that anyone can locate and verify the exact page. Where possible, I have also noted the date of access to reflect the state of the digitized collection at the time of writing (March 2026).

The sources are listed here in chronological order of the events they document, rather than by publication date, to make the historical progression easier to follow. All links were valid and images readable as of the final revision on 19 March 2026.

1. **1856 Tribute and Household Register** This early colonial administrative list records Doroteo Obsanga Victoriano and his wife Calestra Rimon Andrés as a married household in Tibiao. FamilySearch: "Antique, Philippines records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSZ9-XQHK?view=fullText&keywords=Doroteo%20Obsanga&lang=en&groupId=M9MT-H51 : accessed 16 March 2026), image 9 of 176; Image Group Number: 007934501.
2. **1856 List of Exempted Tributarios/Polistas ("Por edad")** This separate exemption list includes Fausto Obsanga, excused from tribute and labor obligations due to advanced age. FamilySearch: "Antique, Philippines records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSZ9-XQ9Y?view=fullText&keywords=Doroteo%20Obsanga&lang=en&groupId=M9MT-H51 : accessed 16 March 2026), image 24 of 176; Image Group Number: 007934501.
3. **1886–1887 Padrón de polistas (complete 25 cabecerias)** The central document of the reconstruction: a full forced labor and tribute roster for Tibiao, with Obsanga entries in Cabecerias 1, 2, and 25. Includes Gregorio Obsanga (63), Juan Obsanga (35), Juan Obsanga dela Cruz (61), Timoteo Obsanga dela Cruz (27), and Don Cerelo Obsanga (33, with "Don" title). Doroteo Obsanga's signature/certification appears at the end of one relevant cabeceria. FamilySearch: "Antique, Philippines records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSCW-99FH-Q?view=fullText&keywords=Obsanga%2CJuan&lang=en&groupId=M9MR-7HN :

accessed 16 March 2026), images 238, 239, 263 of 420; Image Group Number: 007922295.

4. **ca. 1888 Administrative Investigation File (certified Manila 1891)** An official expediente concerning local administrative faults in Antique province, naming Juan Obsanga as alguacil in connection with a reprimand and fine. FamilySearch: "Spain Records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QHK-XQ5B-6Q5M?view=fullText&keywords=Obsanga&lang=en&groupId= : accessed 18 March 2026), image 97 of 160; Image Group Number: 113783864.
5. **1911 Marriage Registry in Tibiao** Civil marriage record of Clemente Lacson and Rosela Obsanga, naming Juan Obsanga and Juana [surname illegible, possibly "Rondino" or similar] as Rosela's parents. FamilySearch: "Tibiao, Antique, Philippines records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-L9LS-NDHQ?view=explore : Mar 16, 2026), image 59 of 72; Image Group Number: 004046265.
6. **1919 Notarial Act in Tibiao** Notarial document explicitly identifying Cayetana Obsanga as the daughter of Doroteo Obsanga. FamilySearch: "Tibiao, Antique, Philippines records," images, FamilySearch (https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSC9-QP4S?view=fullText&keywords=Obsanga%2CAntique&lang=en&groupId= : accessed 16 March 2026), image 359 of 443; Image Group Number: 007919625.

These six sources – all digitized and publicly viewable on FamilySearch – form the entire foundation of this reconstruction. No other archival material (land titles, later notarial protocols, oral histories, or surviving church books) was available at the time of writing. The citations include direct links and image numbers so that readers can access the originals themselves and judge the handwriting, context, and legibility.

In a field like Philippine genealogy, where so much has been lost, every surviving fragment matters. These records are not perfect – some pages are faded, spellings vary, and direct relationships are rarely stated outright – but together they offer a rare and coherent window into one family's place in a small corner of Antique Province during a time of profound change.

If future researchers locate additional documents (especially pre-1890 parish entries or land records), they could confirm or refine the relationships proposed here. Until then, this is the most careful and complete picture the available evidence allows.